GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5401
ANSWERED ON:28.08.2001
REPORT OF DST ON EARTHQUAKES IN FUTURE
GOWDAR MALLIKARJUNAPPA

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Science and Technology (DST) has reported that in future great earthquakes are likely to occur along Southern border of Higher Himalayan range;

(b) if so, whether the Government has considered this report;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether it is also a fact that this conclusion has been reached after the analysis of the data collected by the Global Positioning System sites at North-Western Himalayas; and

(e) if so, the steps being considered by the Government to meet the situation ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT)

(a),(b) & (c): Sir, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) has not reported occurrence of future great earthquakes along southern border of higher Himalayan range. However, the southern border of Himalayan range is well recognized as being the boundary between the Indian and Eurasian plates. According to the theory of plate tectonics, plate boundaries are suspected to be the recurrent sites of earthquakes, especially the moderate and the great ones.

(d)& (e): Data on crustal movement through Global Positioning System (GPS) is being collected by various scientists in the country. According to preliminary investigations carried out by a team of scientists at Centre for Mathematical Modelling and Computer Simulation, Bangalore it has been inferred that the Indian plate is moving northwards with respect to the Eurasian plate at a speed of about 40-45 mm per year. The movement of the Indian plate only suggests the accumulation of forces of geological origin near the Himalayan boundary. In view of the lack of similar observations in the other sectors of Himalaya, no conclusion can be drawn about the occurrence of great earthquakes in any specific region.